



February 27, 2013

Chair Carolyn Tomei  
House Committee on Human Services and Housing  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Tomei and Members of the Committee:

O4AD, representing the 17 Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities, is pleased to offer our support of HB 2712, which sets forward an advisory committee to assist the Department of Human Services in providing recommendations for the General Assistance program.

Area Agencies were providers of the General Assistance program when it was a service offered to Oregon's vulnerable individuals. The program offered a small amount of assistance to a very distinct group of individuals with disabilities who were waiting for their federal benefits to begin. General Assistance, a temporary state benefit, provides necessary support for medical care and a stipend that can help an individual afford rent and medications until they are able to attain their federal benefits. Funds for this program are reimbursed to the state.

As a state, we are looking carefully at how we can increase our investment in prevention and early interventions to help individuals achieve better health and better outcomes with lower cost. General Assistance is an excellent example of a program that makes sense and reaches those goals by avoiding high cost emergency interventions for an individual who is in that difficult 'middle ground' of waiting for their benefits to begin.

O4AD supports HB 2712 and welcomes being a part of this dialogue.

Thank you.

Nicole Palmateer  
O4AD

O4AD works to protect the independence, dignity, choice and safety of Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities. Area Agencies on Aging, our members, provide long-term care services statewide including home delivered meals, Medicaid services for over 50% of the state and Oregon Project Independence. O4AD's members are responsible for service provision to the largest majority of seniors and people with disabilities in Oregon. [www.o4ad.org](http://www.o4ad.org)

Oregon Association of Area Agencies on Aging & Disabilities. [www.o4ad.org](http://www.o4ad.org). [info@o4ad.org](mailto:info@o4ad.org)